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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of a group dynamics workshop held January 26-28, 1970, at Nashville, Tennessee, for 16 professional public health workers. It covered individual psychology, types of groups and their objectives, leadership styles, questioning techniques, and situations dealing with individuals. The 20 point Kropp-Verner Evaluation Scale was used, together with a questionnaire designed to obtain background data and participant evaluations (on a five point scale) of specific program elements. Participants were about evenly divided by age (over or under 35) and sex; most had at least a bachelor's degree; and most were employed at the local or regional, rather than the district or state, level. Over half were health educators, and most had had more than ten years' experience in public health. The instructor received a mean rating of 4.07 (quite effective), Similarly, evaluations of all program topics but one (questioning) were strongly positive. It appears that the questioning segment needs strengthening for future workshops. (LY)

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GROUP DYNAMICS AND PUBLIC HEALTH

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An Evaluation of a Group Leadership and Participation Workshop for the Tennessee Department of Public Health

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A special note of thanks is due Mrs. Annette Gilton, Adult Education Secretary, Memphis State University, and Mrs. Theresa Rollins, Stenographer, Tennessee Department of Public Health, for typing the study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

In this modern era of technological and sociological change, it has become increasingly evident that a person's education must not stop with the attainment of a college degree. Rather, this must be viewed as merely "laying the groundwork" for a life-long learning process. Due to the complex situations in which the public health worker finds himself attempting to operate, it is recognized that he is no exception to the rule, that he too must continue his education.

In consultation with health educators, public information representatives, and the Director of Training for the Tennessee Department of Public Health, it was felt that a workshop embracing various aspects of group dynamics would be of much value. Through the combined efforts of the Tennessee Department of Public Health, the University of Tennessee Center for Career Development, and the Division of Training in State Government, a course from the Executive Development Management Training Program was selected. This was entitled "Group Leadership and Participation."

The workshop was conducted January 26-28, 1970, and covered the following general topics:

1. The Individual
2. Types of Groups and Their Objectives
3. Styles of Leadership

4. Questioning
5. Situations Dealing with Individuals

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the degree of effectiveness of the Group Dynamics Workshop conducted at Nashville, Tennessee, January 26-28, 1970.

Methodology

Source of Data

The source of data for this study was the health educators and public health informational representatives in the State of Tennessee--a total of fourteen. In addition a sanitarian and a health officer, at their own request, were permitted to attend, bringing the total number of participants to sixteen. Of these, fifteen returned their evaluation forms, giving a response rate of 93.8 per cent.

Collection of Data

Two instruments were used to collect the data for this study. The first was a questionnaire keyed to obtain demographic data associated with the participants and their evaluation of various elements of the workshop.

The second instrument was an evaluation scale developed by Russell Kropp and Coolie Verner.[1] According to its authors, it appears

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[1]Russell Kropp and Coolie Verner, "An Attitude Scale Technique for Evaluating Meetings," Adult Education, Vol. III, No. 4 (Summer, 1957), pp. 212-215.

to be a valid instrument for determining an overall rating of participant reaction to short-term workshops. This scale consists of twenty items arranged in rank order of value, with item number one being the best thing that could be checked, items number two, the second best, and so on, with item number twenty, the least favorable.

The instruments were administered by the writers, with the workshop instructor not present.

Statistical Technique

No attempt was made to determine any significant differences between variables. Since no significant differences were being ascertained, no technique other than arithmetical means was necessary. As a result of the decision not to determine significant differences, no hypotheses were developed.

CHAPTER II

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The purpose of this chapter is to present the data collected in this study. This chapter will be composed of the following sections:

1. Profile of the participants.
2. Numerical and percentage responses to items in the questionnaire.
3. Overall effectiveness of the instructor.
4. Effectiveness of the topics presented.
5. Effectiveness of workshop as measured by various statements.
6. Comments as to attributes, dissatisfactions, and recommendations for follow-up activities relative to the workshop.
7. Overall evaluation of workshop as measured by the Kropp-Verner Scale.

Profile of the Participants

The profile of the participants in the workshop is shown in Table 1. Generally speaking, it was found that

1. There were as many of one sex as the other.
2. They were as likely to be 35 years of age and over as less than 35.
3. They were as likely to possess Master's degree or higher as a Bachelor's degree.
4. Over half were health educators.
5. Most of the participants were either employed at the local or regional level as opposed to the district or state level.
6. Most had less than 10 years of experience in public health, with 40 percent possessing less than 5.

TABLE I

Characteristic	Category	Number	Per Cent
1. Sex	Male	8	53.3
	Female	7	46.7
	TOTAL	15	100.0
2. Age	Less than 35	7	46.7
	35 and over	8	53.3
	TOTAL	15	100.0
3. Formal Education	Doctor's degree	2	13.3
	Master's degree	4	26.7
	Bachelor's degree	7	46.7
	Unknown	2	13.3
	TOTAL	15	100.0
4. Discipline	Health Educator	8	53.3
	Informational Representative	3	20.0
	Other	4	26.7
	TOTAL	15	100.0
5. Level of Employment	Local	6	40.0
	District	1	6.7
	Regional	5	33.3
	State	3	20.0
	TOTAL	15	100.0
6. Years Experience in Public Health	Less than 5	6	40.0
	5-9	6	40.0
	10 or more	3	20.0
	TOTAL	15	100.0

Numerical and Percentage Responses to Items in Questionnaire

The numerical and percentage responses to the items in the questionnaire are presented in Table 2. No discussion will be presented in this regard, other than, generally speaking, the ratings were very positive, as it is felt the results are easily discernible.

TABLE 2

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

Item	Category	Number	Per Cent
1. Effectiveness of Instructor	Extremely effective	4	26.7
	Most effective	8	53.3
	Effective	3	20.0
	Least effective	0	0.0
	NOT effective	0	0.0
	TOTAL	15	100.0
2. Topic: The Individual	Extremely effective	3	20.0
	Most effective	5	33.3
	Effective	6	40.0
	Least effective	1	6.7
	NOT effective	0	0.0
	TOTAL	15	100.0
3. Topic: Types of Groups and their Objectives	Extremely effective	1	6.7
	Most effective	10	66.7
	Effective	3	20.0
	Least effective	1	6.7
	NOT effective	0	0.0
	TOTAL	15	100.0
4. Topic: Styles of Leadership	Extremely effective	9	60.0
	Most effective	6	40.0
	Effective	0	0.0
	Least effective	0	0.0
	NOT effective	0	0.0
	TOTAL	15	100.0
5. Topic: Questioning	Extremely effective	1	6.7
	Most effective	1	6.7
	Effective	7	46.6
	Least effective	5	33.3
	NOT effective	1	6.7
	TOTAL	15	100.0
6. Topic: Situations Dealing with Individuals	Extremely effective	3	20.0
	Most effective	4	26.7
	Effective	7	46.6
	Least effective	0	0.0
	NOT effective	1	6.7
	TOTAL	15	100.0

7.	The Information Presented was Relatively New to Me	Strongly agree	0	0.0
		Agree	11	73.3
		Undecided	0	0.0
		Disagree	3	20.0
		Strongly disagree	1	6.7
		TOTAL	15	100.0
8.	The Information Presented Will Be of Benefit to Me in My Work	Strongly agree	8	53.3
		Agree	6	40.0
		Undecided	1	6.7
		Disagree	0	0.0
		Strongly disagree	0	0.0
		TOTAL	15	100.0
9.	As a Result of This Course, I will Be Able to Use Knowledge, Approaches, or Techniques That Were Suggested to Improve My Work Performance	Strongly agree	6	40.0
		Agree	8	53.3
		Undecided	1	6.7
		Disagree	0	0.0
		Strongly disagree	0	0.0
		TOTAL	15	100.0
10.	This Type of Training Constitutes an Effective Learning Experience	Strongly agree	9	60.0
		Agree	6	40.0
		Undecided	0	0.0
		Disagree	0	0.0
		Strongly disagree	0	0.0
		TOTAL	15	100.0

Effectiveness of Instructor

The first segment of the evaluation of the workshop consisted of requesting the participants to rate the overall effectiveness of the instructor. This was based on the following scale:

5 = Extremely effective

4 = Most effective

3 = Effective

2 = Least effective

1 = Not effective

When the results were analyzed, the instructor received a mean rating or 4.07.

Effectiveness of Topics

Using the same scale as presented above, the participants were then asked to rate the effectiveness of the topics presented. Following is a list of the topics presented and the mean rating of each:

1.	The Individual	3.67
2.	Types of Groups and Their Objectives	3.73
3.	Styles of Leadership	4.60
4.	Questioning	2.73
5.	Situations Dealing with Individuals	3.53

First, it should be noted that all of the topics, except one, received a favorable rating. However, "Styles of Leadership" appeared to enjoy the greatest favor from the participants and "Questioning" the least. The low score on this section might indicate that some "strengthening" on this subject is warrented.

Effectiveness of Workshop as Measured by Various Statements

The next segment of the evaluation dealt with the participants reaction to four statements relative to the workshop. These were based on the following scale:

5 = Strongly agree

4 = Agree

3 = Undecided

2 = Disagree

1 = Strongly disagree

Following is a list of these statements and the mean value each received:

1. The information presented was relatively new to me 3.40

2. The information presented will be of benefit to me in my work. 4.47

3. As a result of this course, I feel that I will be able to use knowledge, approaches, or techniques that were suggested to improve my work performance. 4.33

4. This type of training constitutes an effective learning experience. 4.60

One can quickly peruse the above and ascertain that the participants reacted very positively to the workshop.

Comments As to Attributes, Dissatisfactions and Recommendations for Follow-up Activities Relative to the Workshop

The third phase of the evaluation consisted of the participants reacting to the following open-ended statements:

1. Outstanding attributes of the course.
2. Dissatisfaction with the course.
3. Recommendations for follow-up activities.

These responses are presented in their entirety on the following pages, without editorial connections.

Outstanding Attributes of the Course

1. Participation, group getting along together.
2. Participants get to know each other better thus working relationships should be improved.
3. Proper length, well organized, good group participation.
4. Informal, well prepared, no delays.

5. Demonstration of group techniques--group leadership and and participation. It was most effective to learn by doing.

6. The learning by participation, seeing one's self as others see us (closed circuit TV). We may not like what we see, but we should learn from what we see.

7. The way the course was conducted was good because it allowed individual participation. Technical aspects of group leadership and participation, of which I was not thoroughly familiar, were made more clear. I leave taking with me information which I can use.

8. Informal, basic information, room for discussion.

9. The course is provocative and serves as a stimulus to thought and analysis of situations.

10. Group planning, participation, evaluation, opportunity to see and hear ourselves in action (rather shocking).

11. The movie; frequent opportunities to participate in discussions; feedback from the instructor and from the participants; honesty in appraising; congeniality of the group.

12. Small group of relatively same profession gave excellent opportunity to make friendships. Felt free to express myself. Good instructor and presentation.

13. Exchange of ideas between participants; techniques of leadership of which I was previously unaware.

14. I learned how I appear to myself on television; saw possibly myself as some others see me. I learned that I talk too much. I learned to open up a little with my feelings.

15. Very good course, well conducted, and helpful.

<u>Dissatisfactions with the Course</u>

1. Lagged at times.

2. Needed to have more materials before course--or at least a program outline.

3. Some portions of the course seemed to "drag" too much especially in the late afternoon the last two days.

4. Room too warm, seating arrangement not good.

5. Not all questions raised were answered sufficiently.

6. None

7. No major dissatisfactions. There seemed to be duplication in the subject matter early in the course but I believe this was eliminated as course progressed, and there were reasons for certain duplications.

8. Probably could have used more participation by course director--explanation of technical aspects--as resource person.

9. No instruction was suggested pertaining to the "how-to's" of opening a meeting or the use of parliamentary procedure or taking minutes. Lack of discussion opportunities focused on dealing with one or a few specific problems--role playing could have been used here.

10. Several sessions did drag. Did not come as prepared as would liked to have been.

11. The manual was not prepared in such a way as to be of maximum use for reference later. I believe it could be improved.

12. Room did not have round tables, had no sociogram blanks prepared with names, etc., no encouragement to practice role playing, etc.

Recommendations for Follow-up Activities

1. Hope to make use of material covered in working with groups in the future.

2. This course would be helpful to others in our department.

3. Some use should be made of the knowledge gained, possibly by our planning a group leadership-group participation exercise.

4. Other such courses dealing with specific situations would be helpful.

5. Plan for a communication--sensitivity workshop involving these same people.

6. Future meetings with more focus incorporating the points of dissatisfaction mentioned above.

7. Develop means whereby professions can share problems and achievements, but more important, identify strong and weak areas from which workshops might be planned.

8. This course should be presented in other areas of the State so that our colleagues will have benefit of similar training.

9. Give us an evaluation one week later, one month later and one year later to see if the things we learned will stick.

Overall Evaluation As Measured by the Kropp-Verner Scale

The last phase of the evaluation consisted of having the participants to rate the overall effectiveness of the workshop as measured by the Kropp-Verner Evaluation Scale. As stated previously, this is a twenty item scale arranged in rank order of value, with item number one being the best thing that could be said about the workshop and item number 20 the least best.

The participants were requested to read these twenty statements and to check only those that best described their reaction toward the workshop. The ratings of the participants were analyzed and the obtained weighted mean, according to values on the Kropp-Verner Scale, was 3.44. The most positive value possible is 1.13, and the most negative value possible is 10.89, with a median value of 6.02.

Based upon this analysis, it is evident that, in general, participants felt that the institute was very helpful and gave it a rating well on the positive side of the median. In fact, a mean rating of 3.44 would place the overall evaluation at item number 5, which would mean that there were 15 items below the average rating but only 4 above.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Background

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the overall effectiveness of the training given to Tennessee public health workers on group leadership and participation. This training was given at the Tennessee Department of Public Health, Nashville, Tennessee, January 26-28, 1970.

Methodology

The data used in this study were obtained from the sixteen persons attending the workshop. Fifteen returned the evaluation forms, resulting in a return rate of 93.8 per cent. A questionnaire was developed to obtain the information needed. This was supplemented by use of the Kropp-Verner Attitude Scale for measuring the success of training sessions.

No significant differences were examined between variables, therefore no statistical technique was employed other than arithmetical mean. Due to no significant differences being ascertained, no hypotheses were formulated.

Findings

Those participants attending the workshop gave:

1. The instructor a mean rating of 4.07.[1]

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[1] This rating was based on the following scale:
5 = Extremely effective
4 = Most effective
3 = Effective
2 = Least effective
1 = Not effective

2. The topic, The Individual, a mean rating of 3.67.[2]

3. The topic, Types of Groups and Their Objectives, a mean rating of 3.73.

4. The topic, Styles of Leadership, a mean rating of 4.60.

5. The topic, Questioning, a mean rating of 2.73.

6. The topic, Situations Dealing with Individuals, a mean rating of 3.53.

7. The statement, the information presented was relatively new to me, a mean rating of 3.40.[3]

8. The statement, the information presented will be of benefit to me in my work, a mean rating of 4.47.

9. The statement, as a result of this course, I feel that I will be able to use knowledge, approaches, or techniques that were suggested to improve my work performance, a mean rating of 4.33.

10. The statement, this type of training constitutes an effective learning experience, a mean rating of 4.60.

11. The overall workshop a rating of 3.44 as measured by the Kropp-Verner Scale.[4]

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[2] The ratings for the topics were based on the same scale as the rating for the instructor.

[3] The ratings for the statements were based on the following scale:

5 = Strongly agree
4 = Agree
3 = Undecided
2 = Disagree
1 = Strongly disagree

[4] The most positive score possible on the Kropp-Verner Scale is 1.13, and the most negative is 10.89, with a median score value of 6.02.

Conclusions

Based on the date presented in this study, the writers would conclude that the program was very successful in terms of participant satisfaction. The results on all of the measuring instruments were heavily skewed to the positive side.

One segment of the program, the topic of Questioning, however, failed to share this positive rating. It would appear that strengthening of this segment might be warranted for future workshops.

APPENDIX A

GROUP LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION TRAINING
TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
HEALTH EDUCATION-INFORMATION IN-SERVICE

JANUARY 26-28, 1970

Please do not sign this or in any way identify yourself. Consequently, you are encouraged to be absolutely honest in your evaluation of this course.

PERSONAL DATA

1. SEX: ___ Male ___ Female

2. AGE: ___ Less than 35 ___ 35 and over

3. FORMAL EDUCATION (Indicate highest level attained)

___ Doctor's Degree ___ Master's Degree ___ Bachelor's Degree

4. DISCIPLINE: ___ Health Educator ___ Informational Representative

___ Other (specify)_____

5. LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT:

___ Local ___ District ___ Regional ___ State

6. YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN PUBLIC HEALTH

___ Less than 5 years ___ 10 - 14 years ___ 20 or more years

___ 5 - 9 years ___ 15 - 19 years

* *

Please rate the topics covered according to the following scale:

5 = Extremely effective
4 = Most Effective
3 = Effective
2 = Least effective
1 = Not effective

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

TOPIC	RATE
THE INDIVIDUAL	____
TYPES OF GROUPS AND THEIR OBJECTIVES	____
STYLES OF LEADERSHIP	____
QUESTIONING	____
SITUATIONS DEALING WITH INDIVIDUALS	____

The following are some statements with which you may agree or disagree. There are no correct or incorrect answers; so feel free to express your feelings. Please give us your own opinion about these items by circling the answer that best describes how you feel. ALSO, a blank is provided after each for any written comments you may care to make.

1. THE INFORMATION PRESENTED WAS RELATIVELY NEW TO ME,

Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | strongly disagree

Comment: _____

_____

2. THE INFORMATION PRESENTED WILL BE OF BENEFIT TO ME IN MY WORK,

Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly disagree

Comment: _____

_____

3. AS A RESULT OF THIS COURSE, I FEEL THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO USE KNOWLEDGE, APPROACHES, OR TECHNIQUES THAT WERE SUGGESTED TO IMPROVE MY WORK PERFORMANCE,

Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree

Comment: _____

_____

4. THIS TYPE OF TRAINING CONSTITUTES AN EFFECTIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE,

Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree

Comment: _____

_____

Please write out your feelings regarding the following open-ended items:

1. OUTSTANDING ATTRIBUTES OF THE COURSE:

2. DISSATISFACTIONS WITH THE COURSE:

3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES:

KROPP-VERNER EVALUATION SCALE*

Please follow directions carefully: Read all twenty of the following statements. Check as many statements as necessary to describe your reaction to the workshop.

1. ____It was one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had.
2. ____Exactly what I wanted.
3. ____I hope we can have another one in the near future.
4. ____It provided the kind of experience that I can apply to my own situation.
5. ____It helped me personally.
6. ____It solved some problems for me.
7. ____I think it served its purpose.
8. ____It had some merits.
9. ____It was fair.
10. ____It was neither very good nor very poor.
11. ____I was mildly disappointed.
12. ____It was not exactly what I needed.
13. ____It was too general.
14. ____I am not taking any new ideas away.
15. ____It didn't hold my interest.
16. ____It was much too superficial.
17. ____I leave dissatisfied.
18. ____It was very poorly planned.
19. ____I didn't learn a thing.
20. ____It was a complete waste of time.

*Dr. R. Kropp and Dr. C. Verner, Florida State University

IF YOU WISH, ADD ANY COMMENTS ON REVERSE SIDE OF THIS PAGE.

APPENDIX B

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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